

BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2024 – WEEK 4

Hebrews 5:1-6:12: Hope Until the End

And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

– Hebrews 5:10 ESV

- **Jesus is better**

- Hebrews points to the supremacy of Jesus
 - We've seen that in multiple places
 - Jesus is better than...
 - ...angels (1:4, 6, 8)
 - ...prophets (1:1)
 - ...Moses (3:3-4)
 - ...Joshua (4:8-9)
 - ...Aaron the High Priest (7:26-28)
- The better high priest
 - The high priest was the head religious leader of the Israelites
 - Offered a sin offering for the congregation and himself
 - Only person allowed to enter the Most Holy Place behind the veil
 - ~ Sacrificed for himself and the people
 - ~ Sprinkled blood on the Holy of Holies and the Mercy Seat

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. – Hebrews 4:15-16 ESV

- Jesus is greater than the earthly high priest
 - ~ He is our Great High Priest
 - ~ What is so “great” about Jesus as High Priest?

- He is our permanent intercessor
Aaron could only enter the Holy of Holies 1X per year
 - He can empathize with our weakness
He took on human flesh
He set aside His divine prerogatives
 - Tempted as we are, yet without sin
He experienced temptation without giving in
Aaron required constant purification from sin
- Tempted and Tried
- Jesus experienced everything that is dark, problematic, and hard in this world
 - We couldn't trust him if He didn't
 - He was even tempted to sin, just as we are
 - He was tempted by wealth, power, and comfort (Matthew 4:1-11)
 - He was tempted to avoid the suffering of the cross

*“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done....”
And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops
of blood falling down to the ground. – Luke 22:44 ESV*

- We should run to Jesus Christ for sympathy and compassion
 - He is our **great** High Priest because He fully understand us
 - He was tempted and tried but came out guiltless and fully righteous
- What does this mean for us?
 - We can confidently approach the throne of grace (What is this?)
 - ~ Confidence in Christ and his perfect representation
 - ~ We can go before the Lord expecting grace and mercy in time of need
 - ~ We won't be rejected, turned away, or cast out
 - We will be embraced, loved, cared for, and shown grace and mercy –
always

*For every high priest chosen from among men is **appointed to act on behalf of men** in relation to God, to **offer gifts and sacrifices for sins**. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is **beset with weakness**. Because of this he is obligated to **offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people**. – Hebrews 5:1-3 ESV*

*In the days of his flesh, **Jesus offered up prayers and supplications**, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. **And being made perfect**, he became **the source of eternal salvation** to all who obey him... - Hebrews 5:7-10 ESV*

“Jesus did not simply offer sacrifices on behalf of the people as Aaron and his sons had done. Jesus offered Himself. He made the ultimate sacrifice of His own life. And even though He divine, the Son of God, as the human Jesus, “he learned obedience through what he suffered” And His obedience, while it led to His death, resulted in His perfection, His glorification. He was raised from the dead and restored to His rightful place at the side of God the Father. And “he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.” – Ken Miller, Devotionary™ on the Book of Hebrews

- Jesus was the better High Priest
 - Jesus offered a better sacrifice
 - Jesus was the sinless High Priest

“And as a result, those who place their faith in His sacrifice can share in His righteousness and have peace with God. We can be justified, made right with God. He is the great high priest.” – Ken Miller, Devotionary™ on the Book of Hebrews

- **The message of righteousness**

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. – Hebrews 5:11-12 ESV

- The author of Hebrews has been trying to remind his readers about who Christ is and what he has done for them
 - They had forgotten – forgetfulness leads to faithlessness
 - They had become spiritually complacent

You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. – Hebrews 5:12-14 ESV

- Their lack of progression had led to regression
- For the believer, you are either growing or going backwards
- They knew the truths of the faith but failed to go any deeper
 - The author urgently wanted them to grow in their relationship with the Lord

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness. – 1 Peter 2:2 NLT

...you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. – 2 Peter 3:18 NLT

- There is no place for complacency in the life of the believer
- Coming to know the Lord should result in us becoming more like Him

This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. – Ephesians 4:13-15 NLT

- Growing in Christlikeness keeps us from backsliding
 - o It encourages us
 - o It strengthens us
 - o It gives us hope
 - And we are to share that hope with others

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? – Romans 10:13-14 ESV

- o Spiritual growth can't take place in isolation
- o Growth requires interaction with fellow believers (Band of Brothers)

- **Warning and Hope**

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits. For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. – Hebrews 6:1-6 ESV

- Urged again to grow and mature in their relationship with Christ
 - o The author is afraid some in the congregation run the risk of falling away because they are not growing in their walk with the Lord
 - o This had already happened to some in Israel in the Old Testament
 - Rejection of the Promise Land (Numbers 13)
- Think of all they had seen God do
 - o Parting of the Red Sea
 - o Fire leading them by night and a cloud leading them by day
 - o Manna appearing every morning
 - o The Ten Commandments
 - o An entire generation experienced this and still fell away

- If we fail to grow, then we open up ourselves to the possibility of apostasy
 - We become vulnerable to false teaching
 - Paul warns of this

But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. – 2 Timothy 2:16-18 ESV

Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead. – 1 Timothy 4:1-2

- A lack of spiritual growth can have serious consequences
 - The longer a believer strays from the truth, the harder it becomes to repent
 - They will be living a life that makes Christ's death look insufficient

- **There is Hope**

*Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. **For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. – Hebrews 6:9-12 ESV*

- The author sees hope for his readers because of three areas
 - Their work in ministry
 - Their work was not the point, but proof that they had hope in God's promises
 - Their affection for God
 - Their love for God in the midst of trial is proof of their hope
 - Their love for God's people
 - How they serve and love the people of God is proof of their hope
- We aren't perfect, but we can be faithful
 - Work of the ministry, love for God and people are manifestations of Christlikeness
 - We can all do these things, but it's only because of the hope we have in the life-transformative work of Christ
- This fruit-producing life should encourage us to follow Christ no matter our situation
 - What if we're being faithful but we see no fruit?
 - The Christian life doesn't always produce visible fruit
 - Our focus should not be on our fruit but on God's promises. Remember what chapter 11 says:

Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised... – Hebrews 11:35-39 ESV

- Where are you putting your hope and strength?
 - o Works, success, knowledge?
 - o God's promises?

And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. – Hebrews 6:11-12 ESV

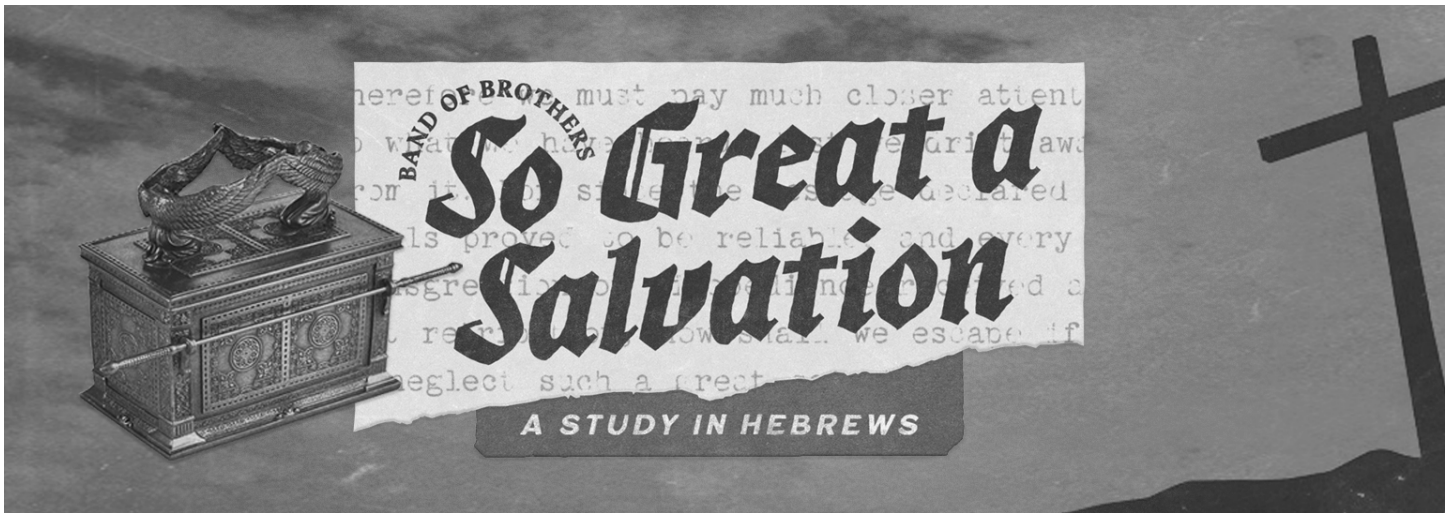
- This is our hope for you
 - o God's promises are trustworthy
 - o God will do what he says he will do
 - o This is where we put our hope when things don't go our way

- **Discussion questions**

According to Hebrews 11:35-39, not all the promises of God get fulfilled in this life. So, why is it essential that we hope until the end?

While we hope and wait, we are to be fruitful. Where have you seen God producing fruit in your life?

Read Hebrews 4:14-16. How does this give you encouragement in your daily life?



BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2024 – WEEK 5 HOMEWORK

WEEK 5 – Hebrews 6:13-7:28: An Anchor for the Soul

The author calls his audience to “hold fast to the hope set before” them. He wants them to finish strong and remain committed to faith alone in Christ alone. He uses a rather obscure Old Testament character to drive his emphasis on Jesus’ superior priesthood. Comparing Jesus to the priest-king Melchizedek, the author establishes Jesus as the superior high priest who is the guarantor of a better covenant. This rather strange comparison is meant to accentuate the unique nature of Jesus’ ministry and message. Unlike Aaron and the other high priests who served the nation of Israel, Jesus became the perfect high priest because of His sinless and never-ending life.

- Read Hebrews 6:13-7:28. Write down any thoughts that jump out at you from these verses.
- Over the week, read pages 37-46 of Ken’s Devotionalary™ on Hebrews.
- As background, read the following passages from Genesis and write down the promises God made to him in each one.

Genesis 12:1-3 –

Genesis 15:5-6 –

Genesis 17:4-8 –

In Hebrews 6:13-20, the author brings up the promises made to Abraham. Which promises did God fulfill in Abraham's lifetime?

Now, read Genesis 22:1-19. Look closely at verses 25-18. How do this passage help you understand which promise of God the author of Hebrews is referring to?

- According to Galatians 3:16, who is the ultimate fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham?

So, in verses 19-20 of Hebrews 6, why should this promise bring hope and assurance to those Jewish Christians who are thinking about returning to Judaism and the law?

How does it encourage you?

- Again, as background, go back and read the Genesis 14:17-24 passage that describes Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek.

How additional information about this king-priest does the author of Hebrews provide in Hebrews 7:1-10?

Why do you think the author is comparing Jesus to this obscure Old Testament figure? What characteristics about Melchizedek does he emphasize?

Under the old covenant, only members of the tribe of Levi could be priests. But Jesus was a member of the tribe of Judah. How is He able to serve as a priest if He was not a Levite?

Look closely at verses 18-19 of Hebrews 7. What was the inherent problem with the priesthood under the old covenant?

According to verses 26-28, what characteristics make Jesus the better high priest?